

What's the Problem?

Every year in the United States, about 3,000 people lose their lives in residential fires. In a fire, smoke and deadly gases tend to spread farther and faster than heat. That's one reason why most fire victims die from inhalation of smoke and toxic gases, not as a result of burns.

This becomes an even bigger problem in larger buildings that numerous people are unfamiliar with and visit everyday. Specific examples are those of hospitals, hotels, and schools. Products such as this exit sign to the right with built in flood lights are used to locate exits in an emergency situation, but there is a major design flaw. In the event of a fire, thick smoke will always rise to the highest point in the room first and make it difficult to see. This is why fire safety personell tell you to get down on the floor and crawl under the smoke. The one problem with this is someone who is completely unfamiliar with the building is not going to be able to find their way to safety when the exit signs and emergency lights are mounted up high in the line of smoke and out of view. Some newer construction buildings have looked into this and have started mounting exit signs at floor level next to the doors. This fixes one of the problems, but what about light to be able to see where you are going? In a building with large hallways and very few windows, it could be extremely hard to just find where the exit would be. This is a major flaw in the way buildings perform in emergency situations. The product called Illumine is aiming at changing the way buildings are equipped and could potentially save numerous lives.

